
A Study on the Performance of Students in English Language at GCE Ordinary Level Examinations Using the “Fishbone Diagram”

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Abstract - The purpose of this study is to investigate the performance of students in English language at GCE O/L examination for the last five years, from 2015 to 2019. According to the performance of school candidates at GCE Ordinary Level Examination, in 2019, 67.70% of the candidates were qualified for GCE Advanced Level in *Vavuniya* district. However, the average pass rate in English language in the same examination was only 42 in the district; 58% of the school candidates have failed. Five schools in *Vavuniya* district were randomly selected and the data collected from the schools were analyzed through Fishbone model. The Fishbone diagram offers comprehensive information of all possible causes to recognize the root cause of the problem and gives possible remedies to eliminate those root causes up to a certain level. The studied problem was "poor performance in English at GCE O/L in *Vavuniya* district" and this creates the head of the Fishbone diagram. All the causes that could generate the studied problem have been categorized under the topics such as school, teacher, zone and student. The findings show that the schools report highest failure rates in English language at GCE O/L examination. Though it shows an improvement, it is not commendable yet. The inefficient monitoring and feedback system from school, shortage of qualified teachers, and irrelevant qualification of teachers, delaying in filling existing vacancies at zonal level and non-habitualisation for learner autonomy, lack of adaptability and competing interests of candidates lead to the above mentioned problem in the study. Therefore, this study suggests the above be rectified to overcome the problem successfully. The study recommends to conduct further studies on the effective mechanism to be adapted for a successful rectification.

Keywords: English language, GCE Ordinary Level Examination, Performance